

House Republican Press Release

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Scribner Driving Bills Pass Senate



Graduated Licensing and Booster Seat Legislation Head to Governor

HARTFORD- Legislation introduced by Representative David Scribner (R-Brookfield) which places restrictions on sixteen and seventeen-year-old drivers passed last night on consent in the state Senate. The bill previously passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives.

The new bill fine-tunes legislation that Representative Scribner initiated and was subsequently passed into law over the past few legislative sessions. The new bill increases the mandated hours behind the wheel for driver training from eight hours to twenty hours, and eliminates restrictions on the age of parents who are passengers in a motor vehicle operated by a sixteen or seventeen-year old, but requires at least one of them to hold an operators license. It also prohibits a sixteen or seventeen-year old who has an operator's license from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the person is driving for work or a school activity, or out of medical necessity. Exemptions are made for ambulance, fire and EMS personnel who are sixteen or seventeen years of age.

"I am pleased to see the state Senate take unanimous action to approve this important measure that will clearly save lives," said **Representative Scribner**. "Easing younger drivers into the responsibilities associated with driving will be safer for them, and will be safer for the other motorists who share the road."

Statistics have demonstrated conclusively that the first few months of a new driver's licensure are critical, and is the period of time when a new driver is most likely to get into a fatal accident. Quite often, the other young occupants in their car distract these young new drivers. According to data compiled by the State Department of Transportation 16 and 17-year-old drivers are 14% more likely to cause a crash resulting in fatalities or injuries while transporting one passenger than while driving alone.

The state Senate also approved legislation introduced by Scribner, who serves as Ranking Member on the joint committee on Transportation, which institutes new guidelines on the use of booster seats in the transportation of children.

Substitute House Bill 6660, "An Act Concerning Child Restraint Systems" would require children under six years old and weighing less than 60 pounds to use approved car

restraint systems, children under one year old or weighing less than 20 pounds to use rear-facing car restraint system and children in booster seats to be secured by seat safety belts with shoulder belts.

According to several credible studies, children in this weight and age gap are at an elevated risk to injury when they are improperly restrained in an adult car seat. Adult lap belts will ride up into the abdominal area, and shoulder belts will cut into the neck of a child so restrained in a serious car accident. This makes these safety devices more likely to cause injury in an accident than prevent it.

“Both of the bills passed by the Senate last night are significant measures which will go a long way toward making motorists and passengers safer,” said **Representative Scribner**.

Both bills now head to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature.